(b) if so, the action taken to clarify the position with regard to Indo-Israel relations to representatives of Arab Countries in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) External Affairs Minister and the Home Minister had visited Israel separately in the month of June/July. The main thrust of these two visits revolved around improvement of India-Israel relations. There had been some inaccurate media reports which have been clarified to representatives of Arab countries by the Ministry of External Affairs. They have been assured that our bilateral relations with any other country will never be developed at the cost of our traditional ties with Arab countries.

Lapses in the Issue of Passport

3327. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a passport has reached the residence of a 'student' who had not applied for that and the passport contained the name and address of that student while the photo was of someone else, as reported in Dainik Jagaran dated 7th August, 2000;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any enquiries into the same;

(c) whether such lapses had helped the hijackers of Indian Airlines arcraft from Nepal who had obtained fake passports; and

(d) the action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. The preliminary enquiry has been completed. While the complicity of the staff of the Passport Office has been established it has not yet been possible to fix responsibility. The enquiry is continuing.

(c) No Sir. The facts of the two cases are altogether different.

(d) The passport in question has been revoked. To prevent such instances the passports of minors from RPO Delhi would henceforth be issued on post-police verification basis.